



FREDERICK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
March 13, 2013

TITLE: Valley Baptist Church of Middletown

FILE NUMBER: SP 97-03, AP 13205, APFO 12521, FRO 13207

REQUEST: Site Plan Approval

The Applicant is requesting Site Plan approval for a single-story 6,160 square foot addition, on an existing 5,940 square foot church located on a 25.10-acre site

PROJECT INFORMATION:

ADDRESS/LOCATION: 5678 Holter Road, located along Holter Road, south of Walter Poole Road.

TAX MAP/PARCEL: Tax Map 75, Parcel 175

COMP. PLAN: Agricultural/Rural

ZONING: Agricultural

PLANNING REGION: Brunswick

WATER/SEWER: W-NPS/S-NPS

APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVES:

APPLICANT: Valley Baptist Church

OWNER: Valley Baptist Church

ENGINEER: Terra Solutions Engineering, LLC

ARCHITECT: N/A

ATTORNEY: N/A

STAFF: Tolson DeSa, Principal Planner II

RECOMMENDATION:

Conditional Approval

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit 1-Site Plan Rendering

STAFF REPORT

ISSUE

The Applicant is requesting site plan approval for the construction of a single-story 6,160 square foot addition (to be used for classroom and gymnasium space) onto an existing 5,940 square foot place of worship. The proposed use is being reviewed as an "Place of Worship" land use under the heading of *Institutional* per §1-19-5.310 Use Table in the Zoning Ordinance and is a principal permitted use in the Agricultural Zoning District subject to site development plan approval.

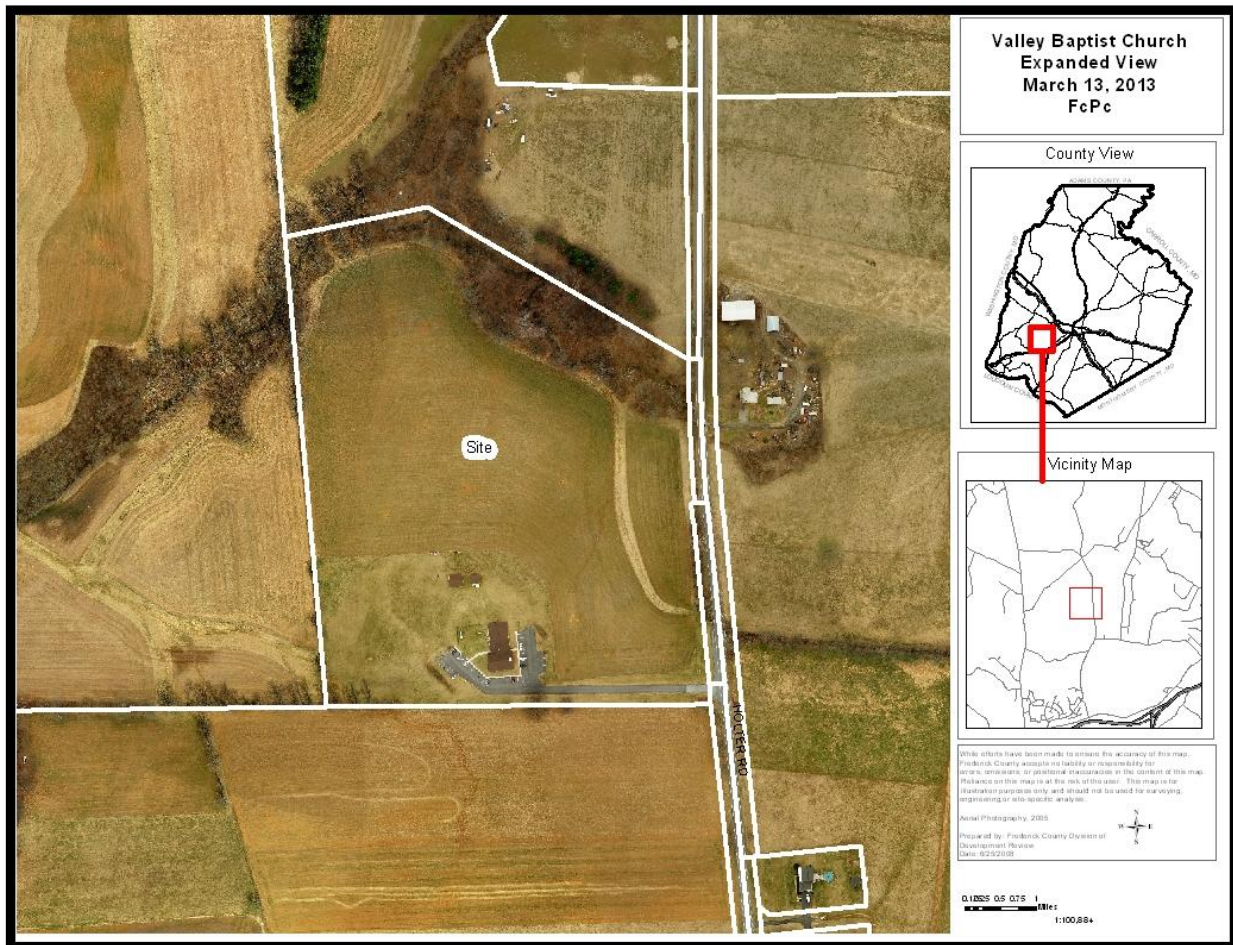
BACKGROUND

This site had prior site plan approval for a 3,256 square foot place of worship with 22 parking spaces from the Frederick County Planning Commission on March 12, 1997. On April 8, 1998 a site plan amendment was approved for the addition of a 2,640 square foot meeting hall with 14 additional parking spaces onto the existing 3,256 square foot place of worship. There was a small increase of 44 square feet in the built area over the approved plan in 1998, which resulted in a final finished building square footage of 5,940 square feet.

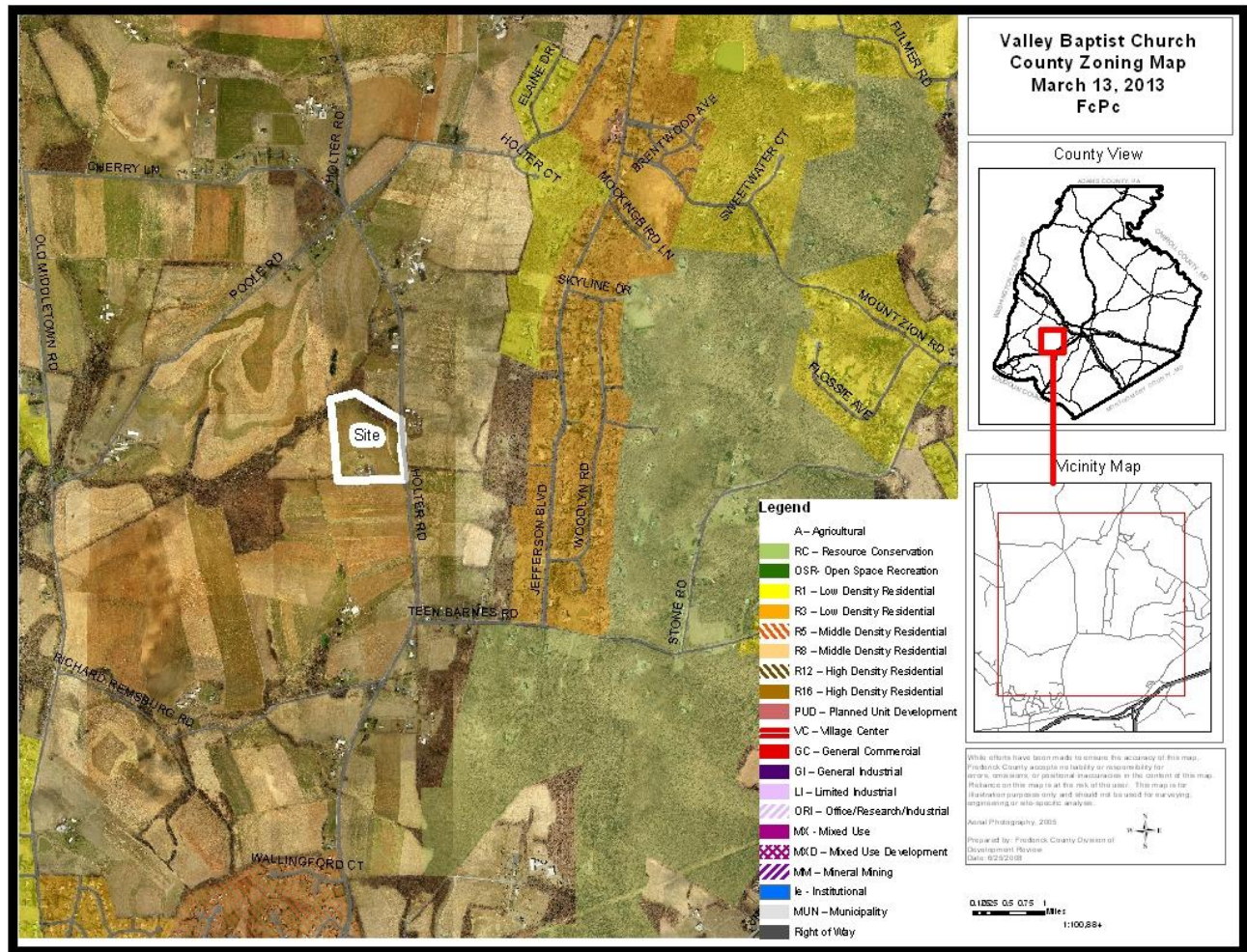
On March 8, 2011 an addition plat was approved which added an adjacent 14.58 acres onto the existing 10.42 acre Valley Baptist Church parcel for a combined total of 25.10 acres.

The site is currently zoned Agricultural (See Graphic #2), and is developed with an existing 5,940 square foot place of worship. The property surrounding this site in all directions is zoned agricultural and appears to be actively farmed (See Graphic #1).

Graphic #1



Graphic #2



ANALYSIS

Summary of Development Standards Findings and Conclusions

As part of the review process it was noted that the existing parking lot does not comply with zoning ordinance landscaping requirements. Therefore, Staff worked with the Applicant in order to develop a landscape plan that meets the requirements of the Code with minimal disruption to the existing parking area.

Detailed Analysis of Findings and Conclusions

Site Development Plan Approval shall be granted based upon the criteria found in §1-19-3.300.4 Site Plan Review Approval Criteria of the Frederick County zoning ordinance.

Site Development §1-19-3.300.4 (A): Existing and anticipated surrounding land uses have been adequately considered in the design of the development and negative impacts have been minimized through such means as building placement or scale, landscaping, or screening, and an evaluation of lighting. Anticipated surrounding uses shall be determined based upon existing zoning and land use designations.

Findings/Conclusions

1. **Dimensional Requirements/Bulk Standards §1-19-6.100:** Section 1-19-6.100 of the Zoning Ordinance stipulates the setback requirements and the minimum lot area for the proposed use. The setback requirements for an 'Institutional' use with the Agricultural (AG) zoning district are 40-foot front yard, 50-foot side yards, with a 50-foot rear yard. The minimum lot size for the zoning district is 40,000 square feet. The proposed lot size is 25.10-acres and lot dimensions provide ample area for development of the site. The proposed plan meets the required Bulk/Dimensional requirements.
2. **Signage §1-19-6.300:** The Applicant will utilize the existing signage on site. The existing signage complies with Zoning Ordinance §1-19-6.320.
3. **Landscaping §1-19-6.400:** The Applicant has proposed a landscape plan in accordance with Zoning Ordinance §1-19-6.400. The Applicant has worked with Staff to retrofit a painted island within the existing parking area into a landscaped island in order to achieve the required 20% tree canopy cover. The Applicant also added additional trees around the exterior of the parking area for increased aesthetics within the site. The landscaping plan complies with the requirements of Zoning Ordinance §1-19-6.400.
4. **Lighting §1-19-6.500:** There are no additional lights proposed as part of this development application. The existing site lighting levels do not exceed 0.5 foot candles at the property lines.

Transportation and Parking §1-19-3.300.4 (B): *The transportation system and parking areas are adequate to serve the proposed use in addition to existing uses by providing safe and efficient circulation, and design consideration that maximizes connections with surrounding land uses and accommodates public transit facilities. Evaluation factors include: on-street parking impacts, off-street parking and loading design, access location and design, vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation and safety, and existing or planned transit facilities.*

Findings/Conclusions

1. **Access/Circulation:** The site will utilize the existing 20-foot wide access point onto Holter Road.
2. **Connectivity §1-19-6.220 (F):** All of the surrounding properties are used for agricultural or residential purposes. There are no further connections proposed to adjacent parcels as part of this application.
3. **Public Transit:** This site is not served by Transit.
4. **Vehicle Parking and Loading §1-19-6.200-through 1-19-6.220:** The site will use the existing 45 parking spaces located on site. Pursuant to Zoning Ordinance §1-19-6.220, parking spaces requirements for a Place of Worship are 1 space for every 5 seats in the sanctuary. Based on information provided by the Applicant, the existing facility contains 225 sanctuary seats, which would require 45 parking spaces. There are 45 existing parking spaces located on site which were constructed for the existing facility and will remain. Although modifications to the parking lot were made to accommodate landscaping requirements, no changes to the number of parking spaces is proposed as part of this application.
5. **Bicycle Parking §1-19-6.220 (H):** Bicycle parking is not required because this site is not located within 1.2 miles of a designated growth area.

6. **Pedestrian Circulation and Safety §1-19-6.220 (G):** The Applicant is proposing a new sidewalk section that will link the proposed gymnasium to the existing sidewalk adjacent to the parking area to the west.

Public Utilities §1-19-3.300.4 (C): *Where the proposed development will be served by publicly owned community water and sewer, the facilities shall be adequate to serve the proposed development. Where proposed development will be served by facilities other than publicly owned community water and sewer, the facilities shall meet the requirements of and receive approval from the Maryland Department of the Environment/the Frederick County Health Department.*

Findings/Conclusions

1. **Private Well and Septic:** The site is classified as No Planned Service (NPS) for both water and sewer. The site is served by private well and septic.

Natural features §1-19-3.300.4 (D): *Natural features of the site have been evaluated and to the greatest extent practical maintained in a natural state and incorporated into the design of the development. Evaluation factors include topography, vegetation, sensitive resources, and natural hazards.*

Findings/Conclusions

1. **Topography:** The site is relatively flat land with a slight slope up from Holter Road.
2. **Vegetation:** The site is grass with a small patch of forested area along the northern property boundary. Several large trees also exist along the southern property boundary.
3. **Sensitive Resources:** There are no sensitive resources located on this site.
4. **Natural Hazards:** No natural hazards located on this site are being impacted by any proposed development.

Other Applicable Regulations

Stormwater Management – Chapter 1-15.2: Stormwater management has been provided in accordance with the 2000 Maryland SWM Design Manual and the SWM Act of 2007.

APFO – Chapter 1-20:

1. **Schools.** The proposed land use is a non-residential project and is therefore not subject to the schools APFO review.
2. **Water/Sewer.** Public Water and Sewer is not impacted because the site is served by private well and septic.
3. **Roads.** This project will not generate any additional weekday peak hour trips and is therefore exempt from any APFO road mitigation requirements.

Forest Resource – Chapter 1-21: Forestation requirements are being met via the payment of a fee-in-lieu. Mitigation must be provided prior to application for grading or building permit, whichever is applied for first.

Summary of Agency Comments

<i>Other Agency or Ordinance Requirements</i>	<i>Comment</i>
<i>Development Review Engineering (DRE):</i>	Conditional Approval
<i>Development Review Planning:</i>	Address all agency comments as the plan proceeds to completion.
<i>State Highway Administration (SHA):</i>	N/A
<i>Div. of Utilities and Solid Waste Mngt. (DUSWM):</i>	N/A
<i>Health Dept.</i>	Conditional Approval
<i>Office of Life Safety</i>	Approved
<i>DPDR Traffic Engineering</i>	Approved
<i>Historic Preservation</i>	N/A

RECOMMENDATION

Staff has no objection to conditional approval of the Site Plan. If the Planning Commission conditionally approves the site plan, the site plan is valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of Planning Commission approval.

Based upon the findings and conclusions as presented in the staff report, the application meets or will meet all applicable Zoning, APFO, and FRO requirements once the following conditions are met:

1. Address all agency comments as the plan proceeds through to completion.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

MOTION TO APPROVE

I move that the Planning Commission **APPROVE** Site Plan SP 97-03 **with conditions** as listed in the staff report for the proposed Valley Baptist Church of Middletown, based on the findings and conclusions of the staff report and the testimony, exhibits, and documentary evidence produced at the public meeting.

